

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the application.

1. (Original) A high-brightness polarizing plate, comprising: a polarizing plate that comprises a polarizer and a protective film prepared on one or both sides of the polarizer; a brightness enhancement film; and an adhesive layer through which the polarizing plate and the brightness enhancement film are laminated with the protective film interposed between them, wherein

the protective film has an in-plane retardation  $R_e$  of 0 to 10 nm and a thickness-direction retardation  $R_{th}$  of -30 to 10 nm, wherein

$$R_e = (n_x - n_y)d \text{ and } R_{th} = \{(n_x + n_y)/(2 - n_z)\}d, \text{ wherein}$$

$n_x$  is a refractive index in an X-axis direction in which a maximum in-plane refractive index is obtained,  $n_y$  is a refractive index in a Y-axis direction perpendicular to the X-axis,  $n_z$  is a refractive index in a Z-axis direction which is the film thickness direction, and  $d$  is a thickness (nm) of the protective film.

2. (Original) The high-brightness polarizing plate according to Claim 1, wherein the protective film contains (A) a thermoplastic resin having a substituted and/or unsubstituted imide group in side chain and (B) a thermoplastic resin having a substituted and/or unsubstituted phenyl and nitrile groups in side chain.

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3. (Currently Amended) The high-brightness polarizing plate according to Claim 1 [[or 2]], wherein the protective film is a biaxially stretched film.

4. (Currently Amended) The high-brightness polarizing plate according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 3~~ Claim 1, wherein the polarizer is an iodine-containing polyvinyl alcohol-based film.

5. (Currently Amended) The high-brightness polarizing plate according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 4~~ Claim 1, wherein the brightness enhancement film is an anisotropic reflection polarizer.

6. (Original) The high-brightness polarizing plate according to Claim 5, wherein the anisotropic reflection polarizer is a composite of a cholesteric liquid crystal layer and a quarter wavelength plate.

7. (Original) The high-brightness polarizing plate according to Claim 5, wherein the anisotropic reflection polarizer is an anisotropic multilayered thin film capable of transmitting linearly polarized light in one direction of vibration and reflecting linearly polarized light that in another direction of vibration.

8. (Original) The high-brightness polarizing plate according to Claim 5, wherein the anisotropic reflection polarizer is a reflective grid polarizer.

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9. (Currently Amended) The high-brightness polarizing plate according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 4~~ Claim 1, wherein the brightness enhancement film is an anisotropic scattering polarizer.

10. (Currently Amended) A high-brightness polarizing plate, comprising the high-brightness polarizing plate according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 9~~ Claim 1 and at least one optical film.

11. (Currently Amended) A liquid crystal panel, comprising a liquid crystal cell and the high-brightness polarizing plate according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 10~~ Claim 1 attached to at least one side of the liquid crystal cell.

12. (Original) A liquid crystal display, comprising the liquid crystal panel according to Claim 11.

13. (Currently Amended) An image viewing display, comprising the high-brightness polarizing plate according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 10~~ Claim 1.